

FIRST
COMICS 1987
FIFTH
ANNIVERSARY
FEB 1988
32
\$1.75 \$2.45
CANADA

BADGER™



S. RUDE 87

WHO ARE THESE GUYS, ANYWAY?



The Badger is **Norbert Sykes**, a Vietnam veteran suffering from an extremely rare multiple personality disorder, which has its origins in childhood trauma. Seven great personalities in one. The personality most frequently inhabited by Norbert, indeed almost *exclusively preferred*, is the Badger, a self-styled crime fighter who rides the highways and by-ways of America, meting out bloody justice to jaywalkers, ticket scalpers, indifferent teenaged fast food clerks, in fact, *any damn body he feels like because he's CRAZY!*

Badger is an expert at hand-to-hand combat. He began his training in Shorin-ryu but has since gone on to master dozens of obscure, esoteric, arcane, not to mention obtruse martial arts, the likes of which you seldom hear about.

He can also talk to the animals — just like Dr. Doolittle, or Lorne Greene. Only Badger gets better results than Lorne Greene.

Badger lives with **Ham the Weather Wizard** in a castle south of Barneveld, Wisconsin. Ham and Badger met while both were inmates at a state mental hospital. Through cunning and chicanery, Ham has amassed a considerable fortune.

LAST ISSUE: Ham gave Badger and **Riley Thorpe** a secret word to turn them into invincible Celtic warriors so they could fight their way into the island stronghold of **Hop Ling Sung** to get a cure for the "delayed death touch" that **Ron Dorgan** laid on Badger. But Badger forgot the magic word...

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A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION



SHOWDOWN IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

BADGER™

THAT'S RIGHT,
BADGER! YOU CAME
ALL THIS DISTANCE, FOUGHT
YOUR WAY IN HERE, WON A
REPRIEVE, AND NOW YOU
HAVE TO FIGHT
ME AGAIN.

mike baron
script
bill reinhold
artist
willie schubert
letters
ray murtaugh
colors
rick oliver
edits

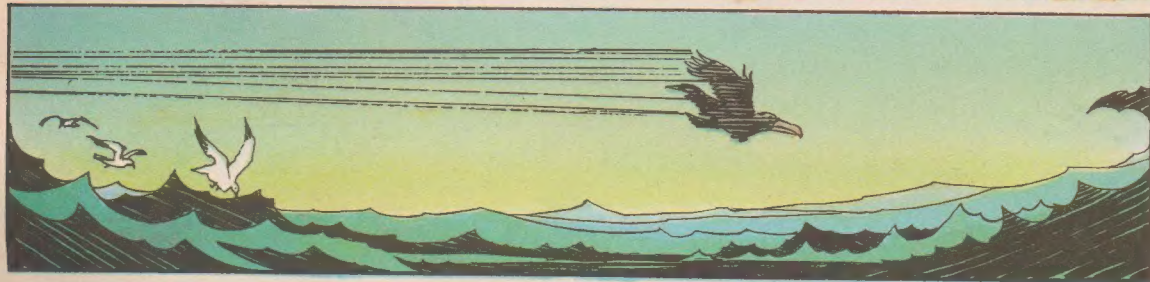
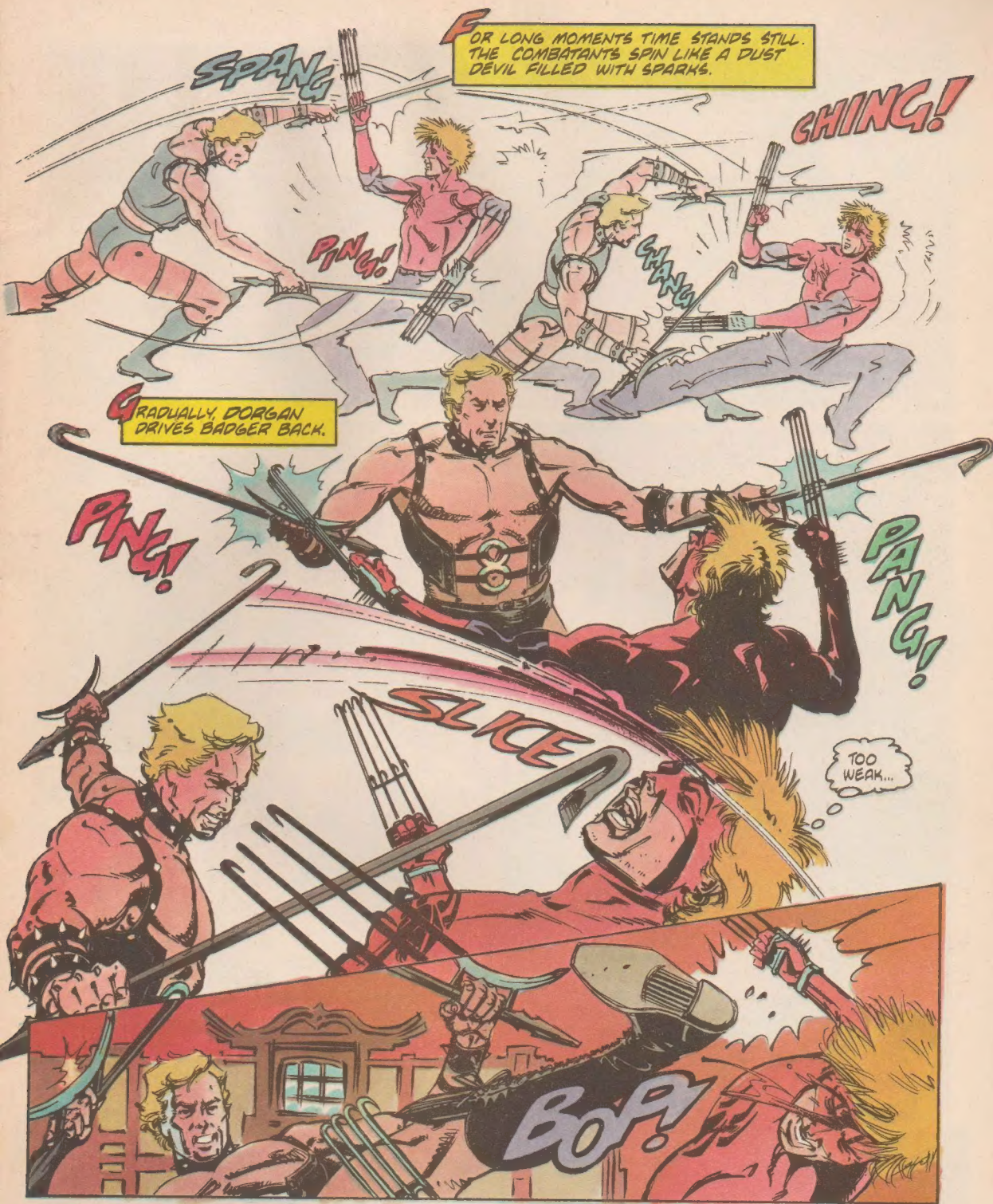
I
NEED MY
CLAWS!

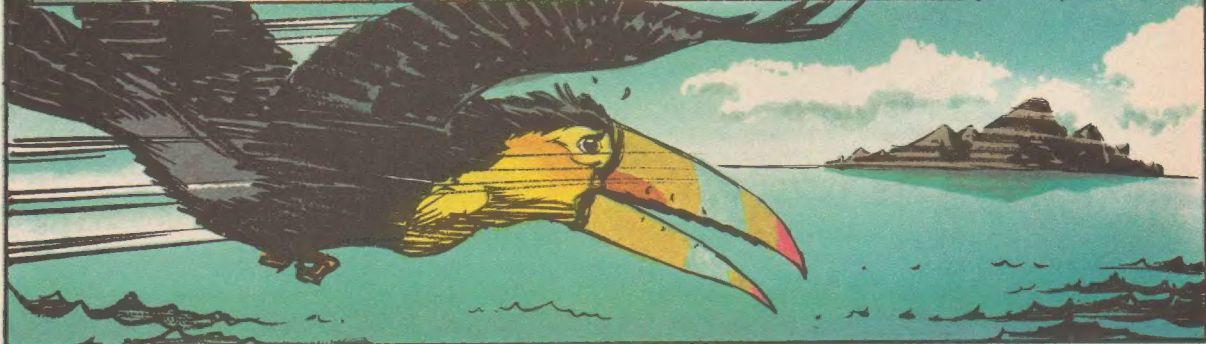
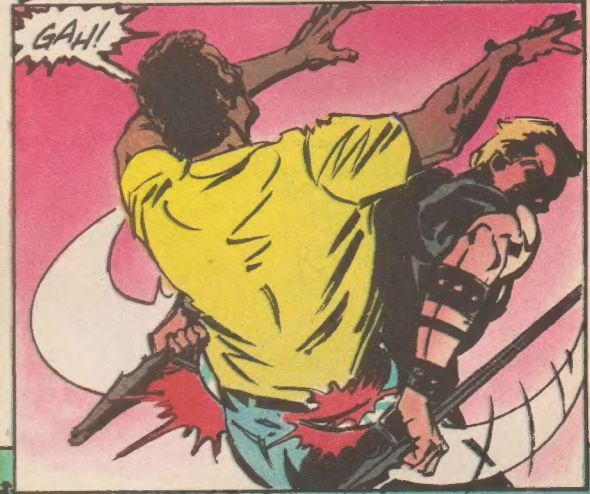
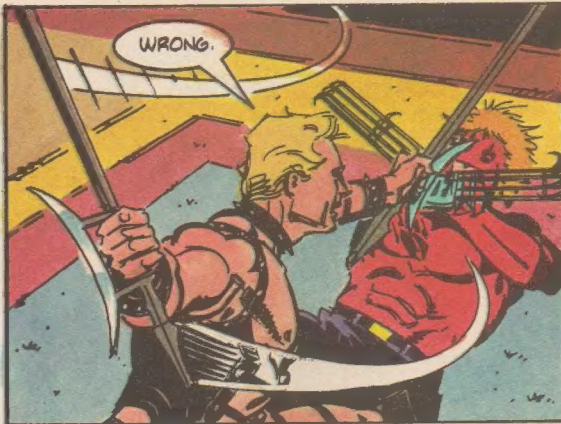
YOU NEED
TO REMEMBER THE
SECRET PHRASE THAT
HAM GAVE YOU TO
TURN US INTO
UNBEATABLE CELTIC
WARRIORS, MAN!

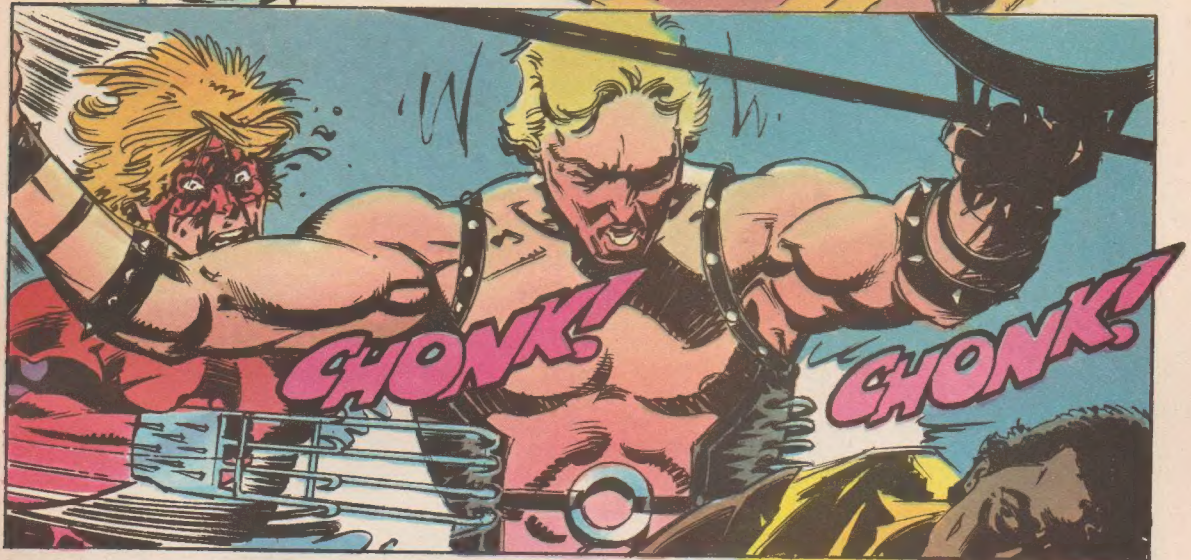
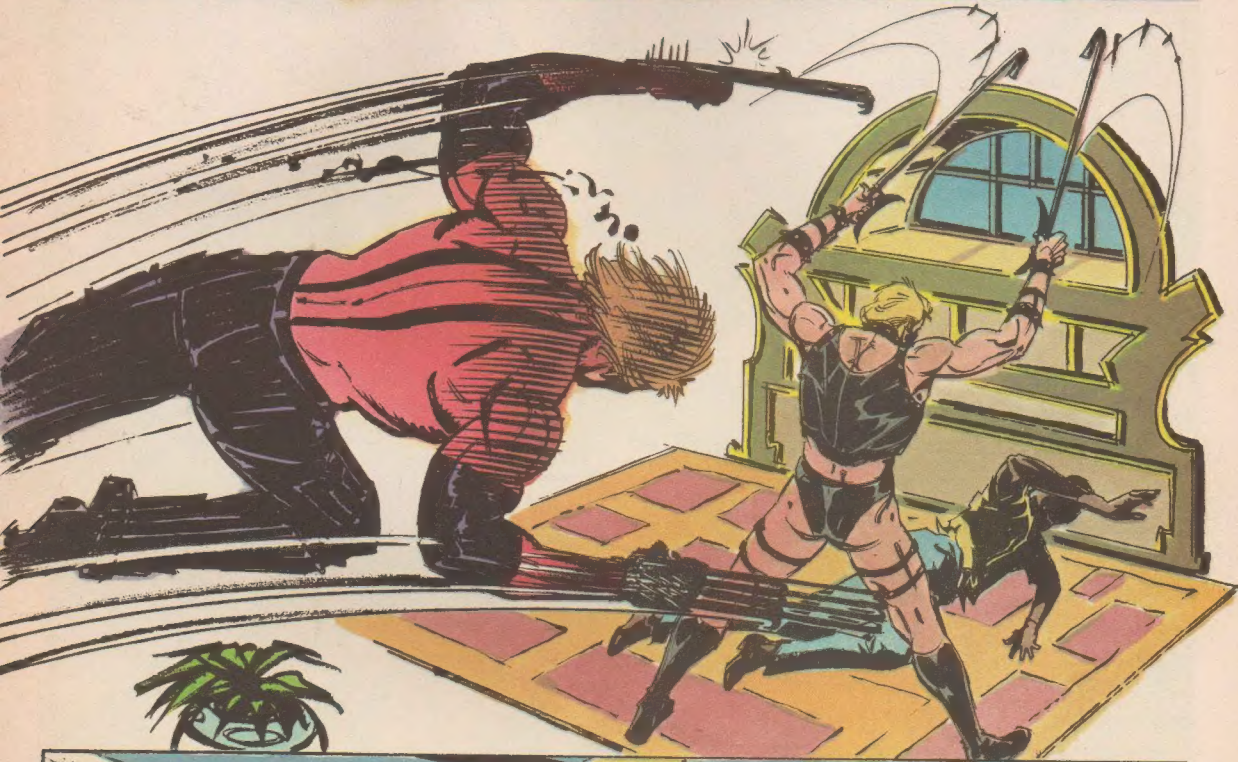
SHUT UP.
I FORGOT.

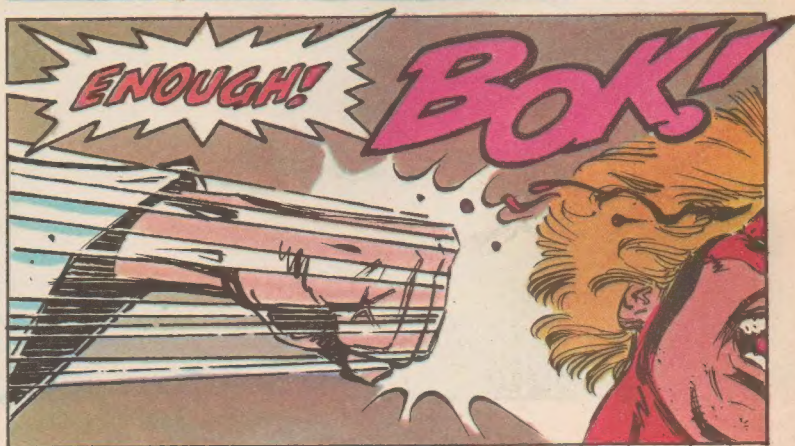
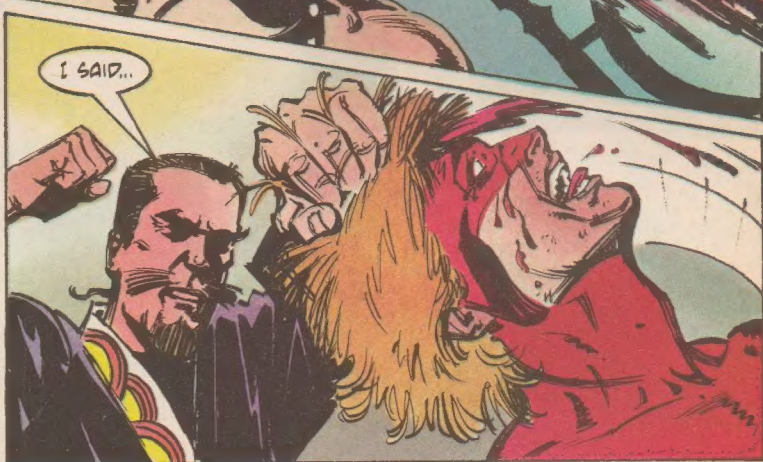
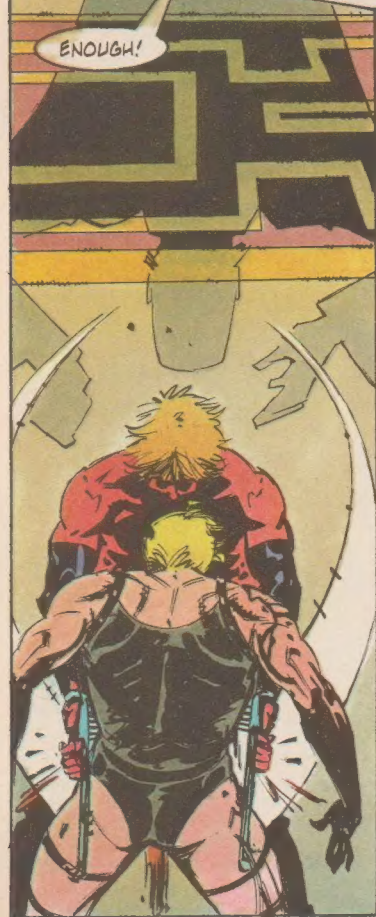
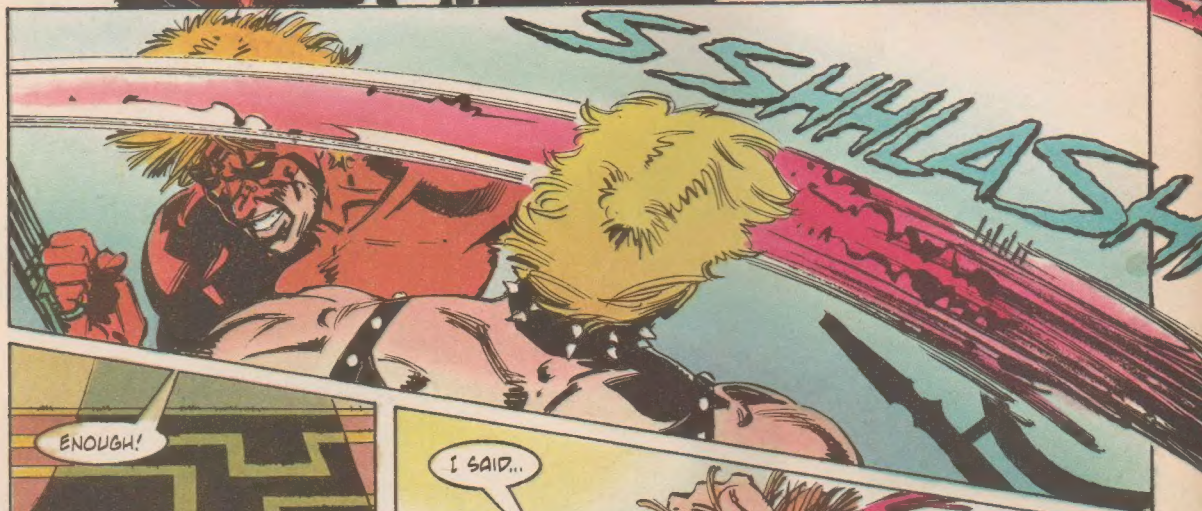
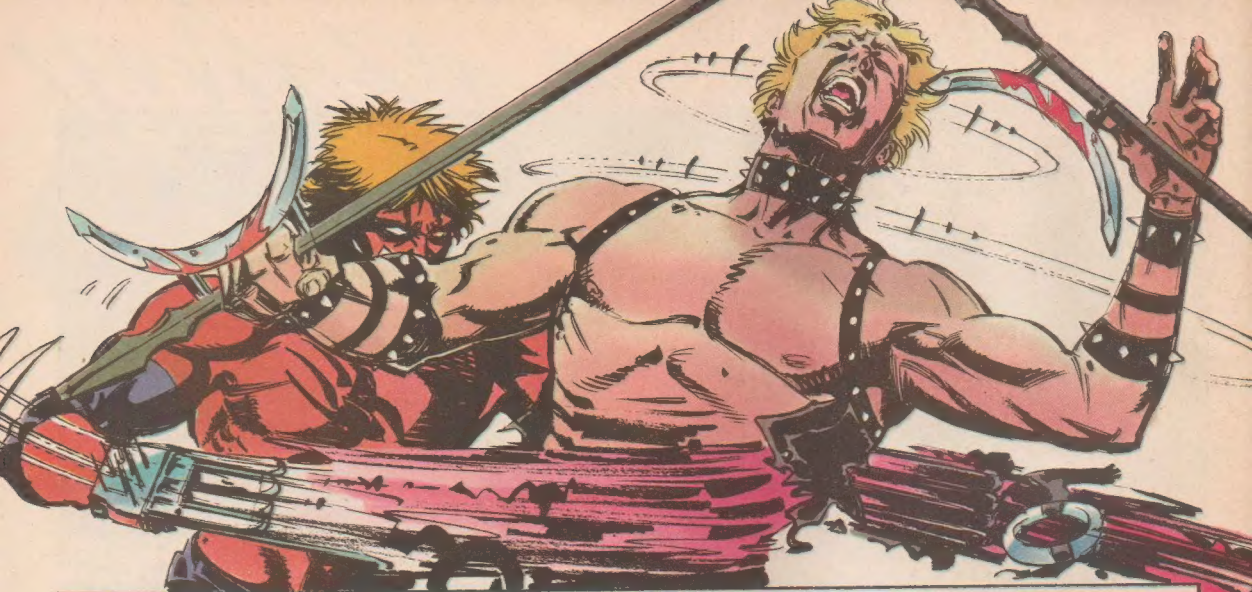
YOU
A DAMN
FOOL,
MAN!

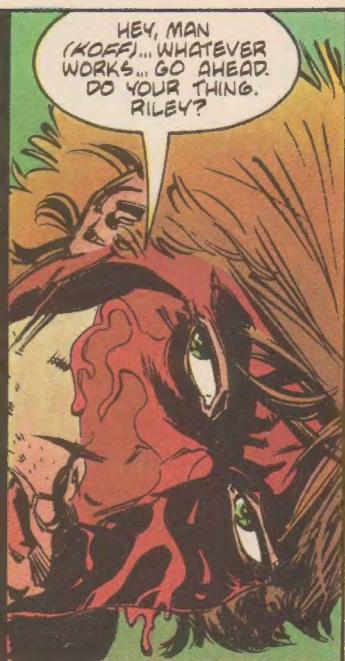


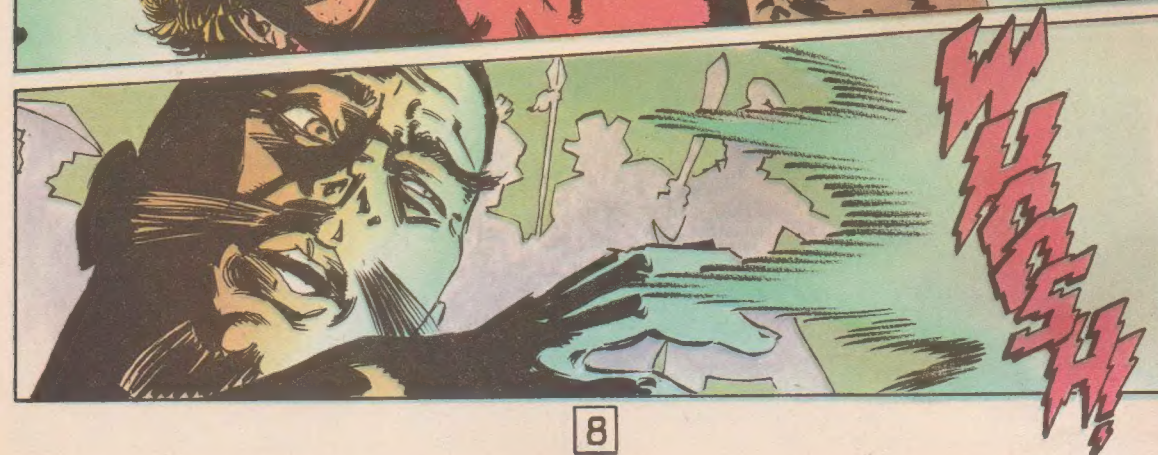
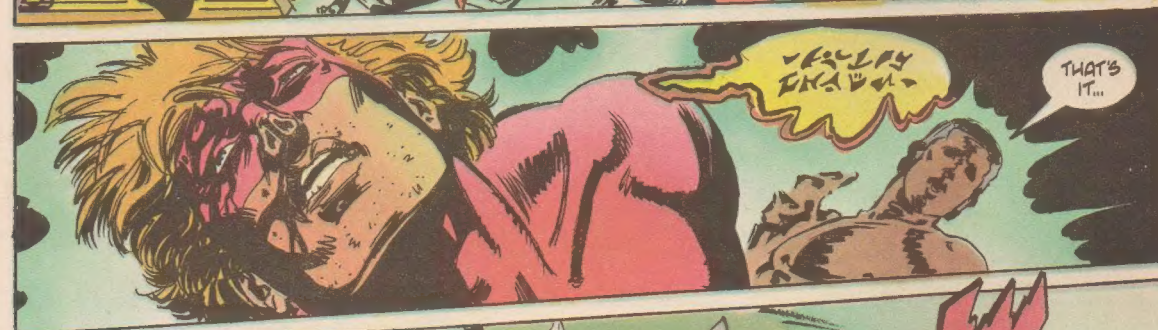
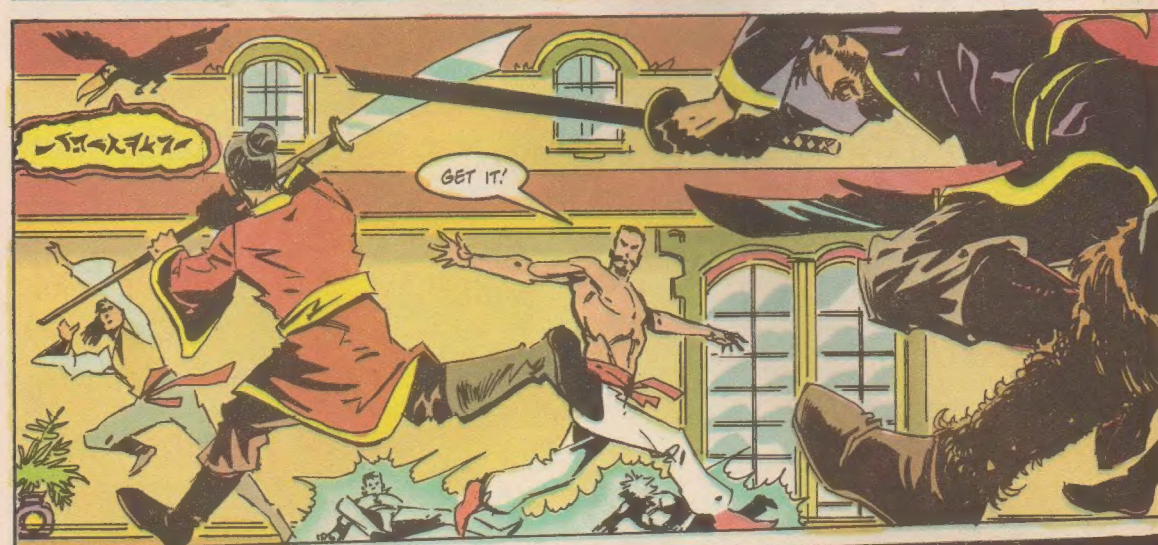
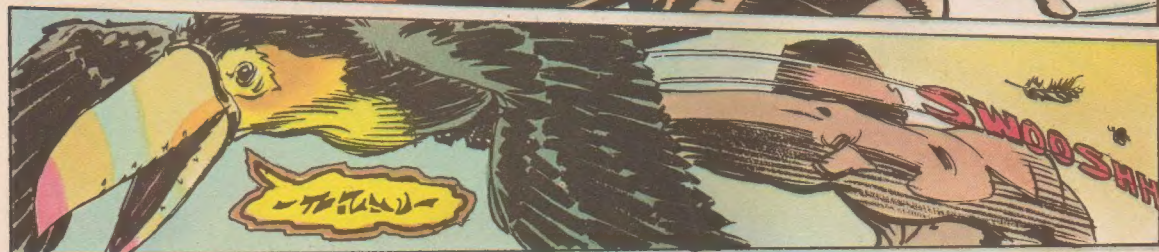
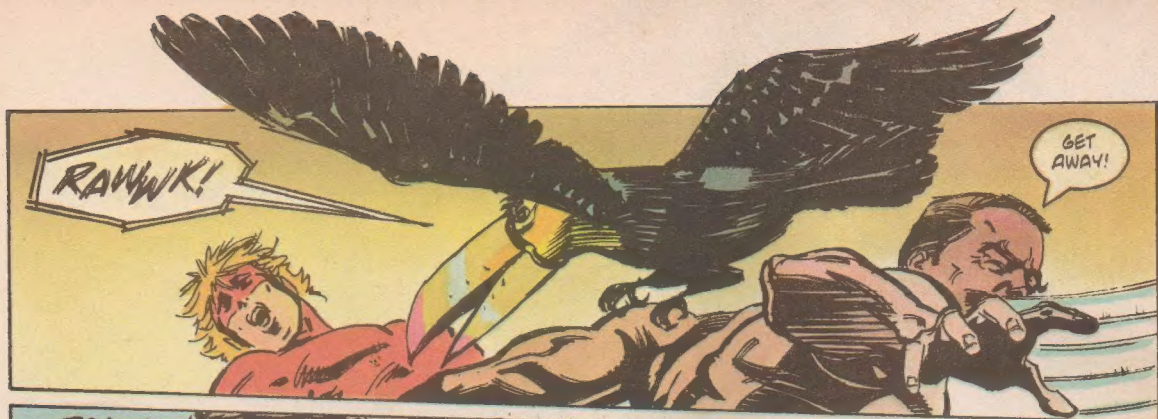


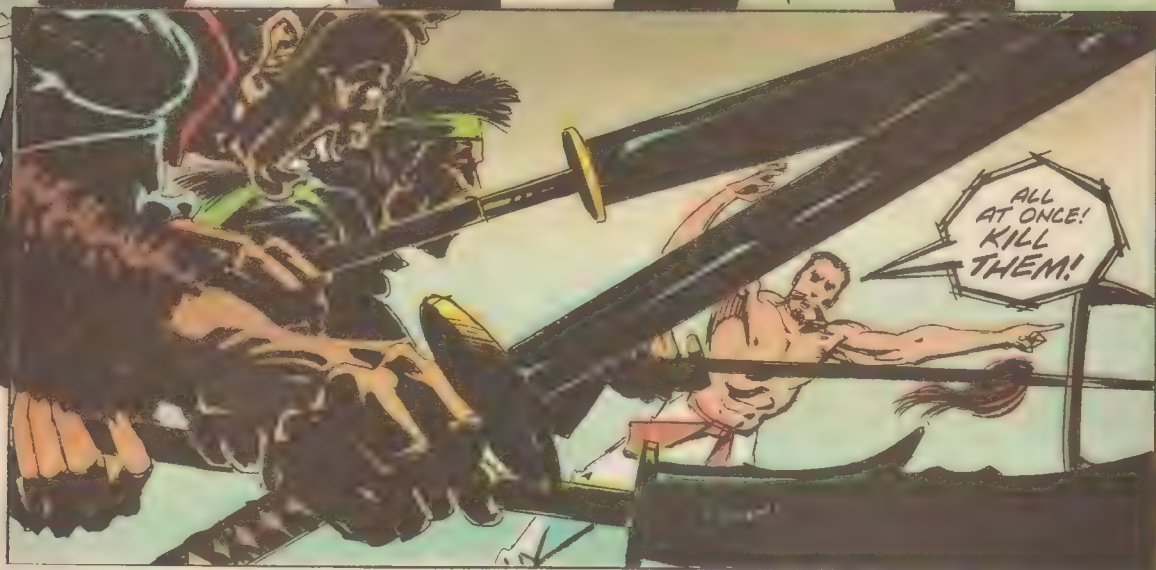
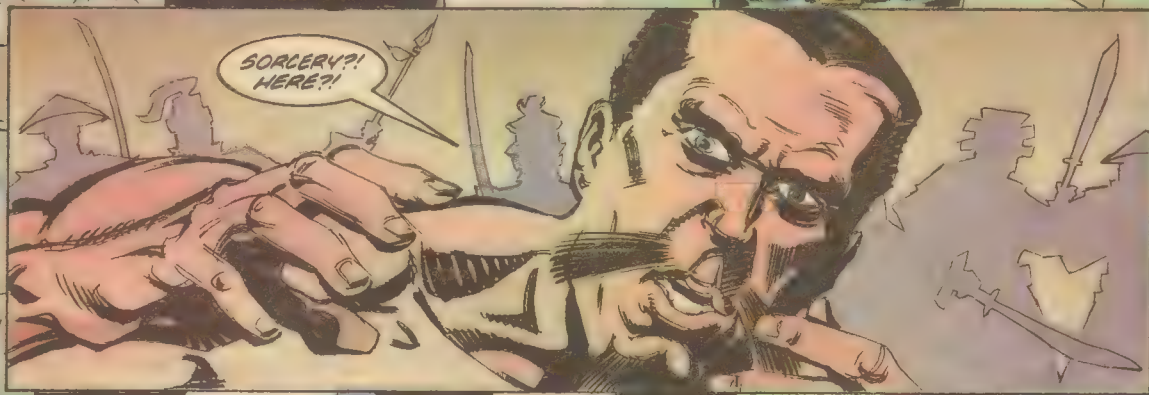


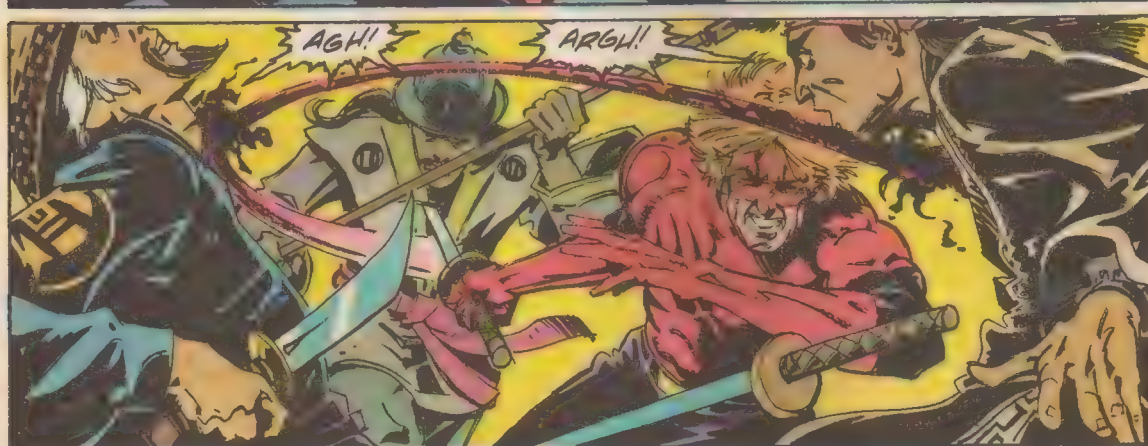
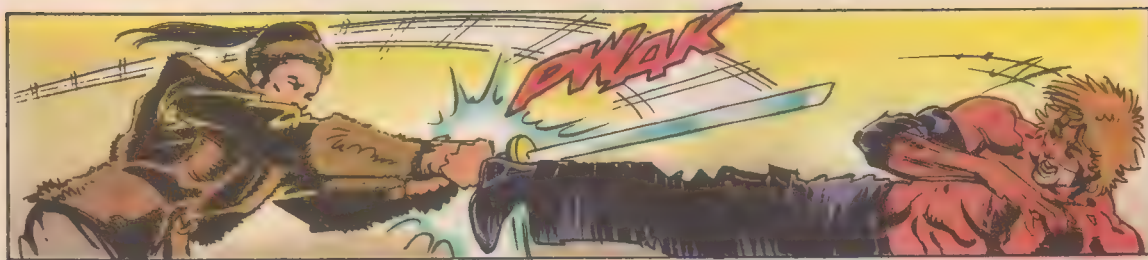


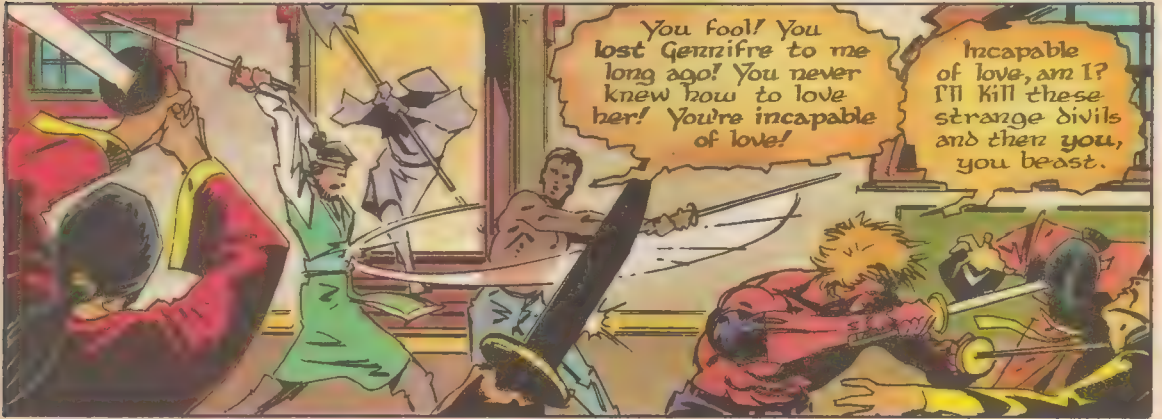












S A B L E

RETURN OF THE HUNTER

BY MARY WOLFMAN

AND BILL JAASKA

'NUMBER ONE'

HE'S
GOT
YOUR
NUMBER

NEW
SERIES!



COMING IN NOVEMBER FROM FIRST. COUNT ON US.

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B A D G E R

NUMBER THIRTY-THREE

BY MIKE BARON,

AND RON LIM

THE WINNING NUMBER

COVER BY
MIKE ZECK

BEGINNING
IN ISSUE
NUMBER
THIRTY-THREE



COMING IN NOVEMBER FROM FIRST. COUNT ON US.

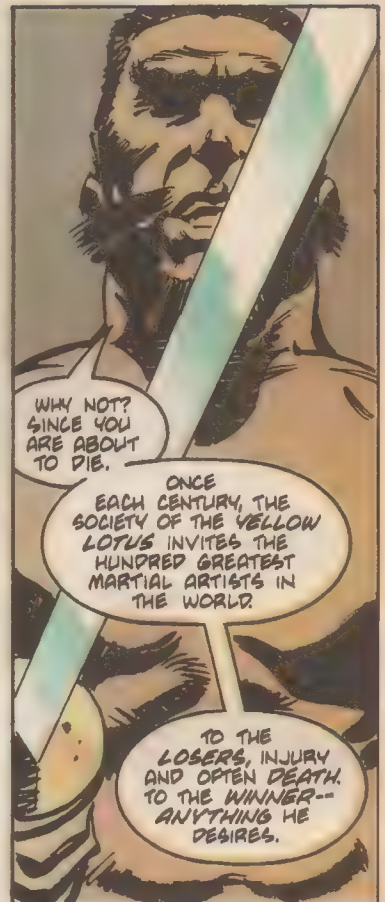
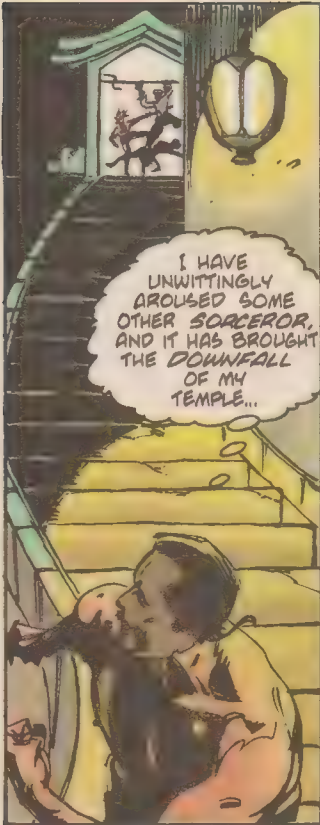
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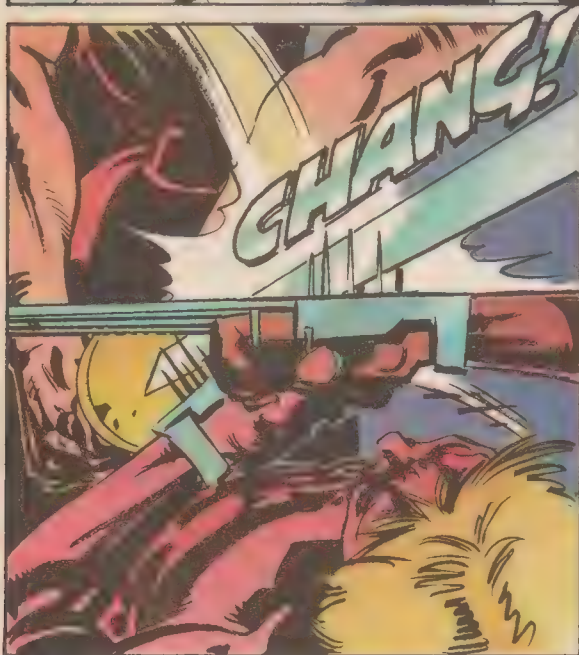
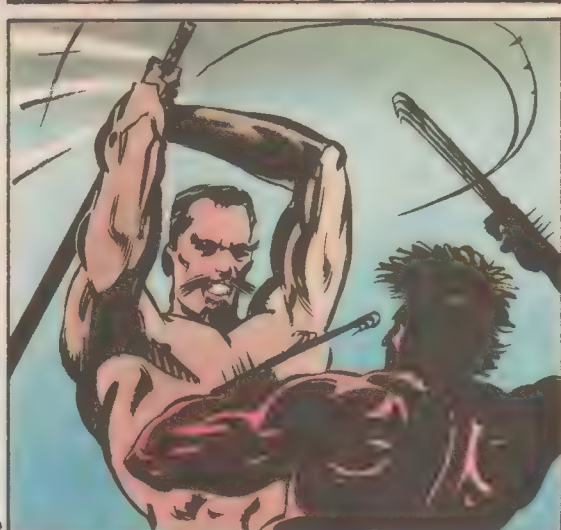
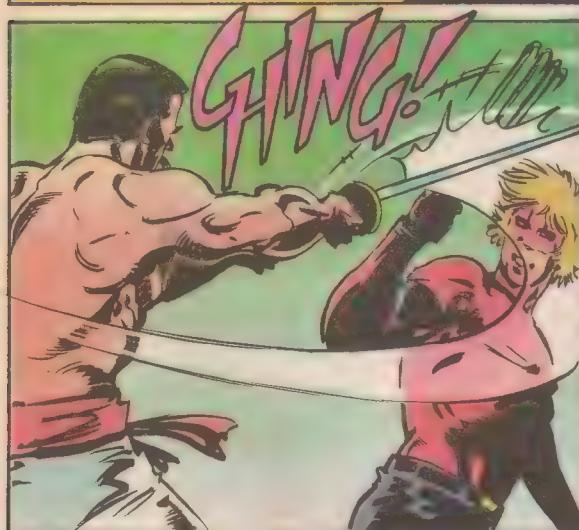


Ah well...
at least we're
having fun, eh
cousin?



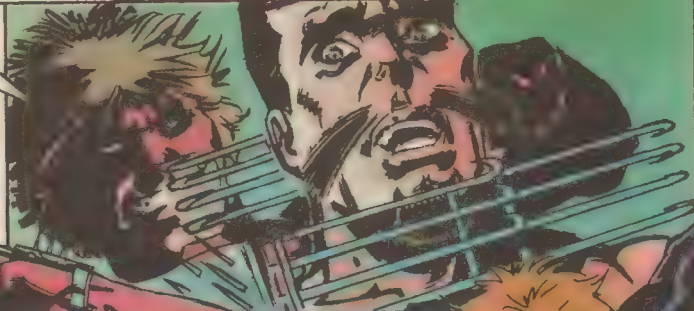
Not as
much fun as
we're going to
have, cousin.





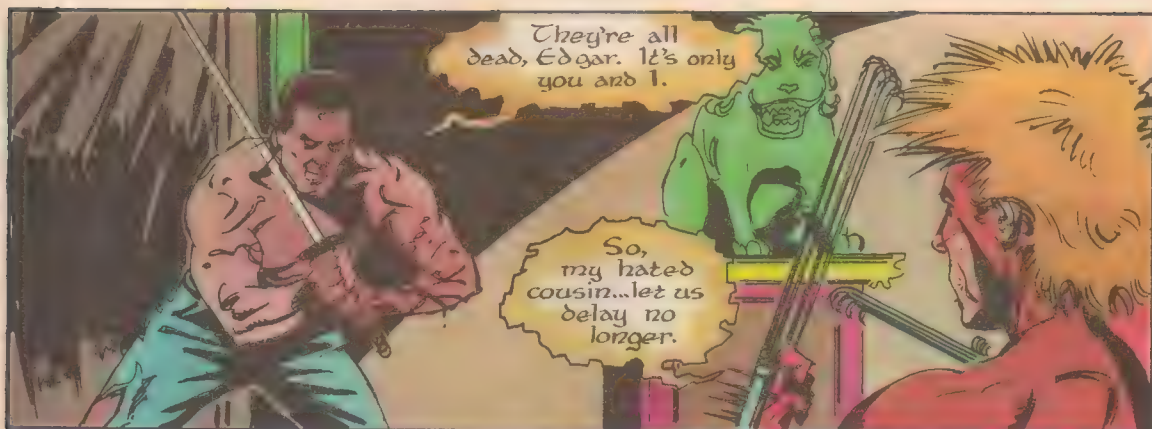


SAY
CHEESE...



LIF-DA!





W H I S P E R

N U M B E R T W E L V E

ORIGINAL ARTIST RICH LARSON

JOINS CREATOR/WRITER STEVEN GRANT

FOR A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS ISSUE!

YOUR LUCKY NUMBER

COVER BY

BILL

SIENKIEWICZ



COMING IN DECEMBER FROM FIRST. COUNT ON US.

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AMERICAN FLAGG!

NUMBER FIFTY

BY HOWARD CHAYKIN

AND MIKE VOSBURG

THE NUMBER ONE CHOICE

SPECIAL
FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY
ISSUE!

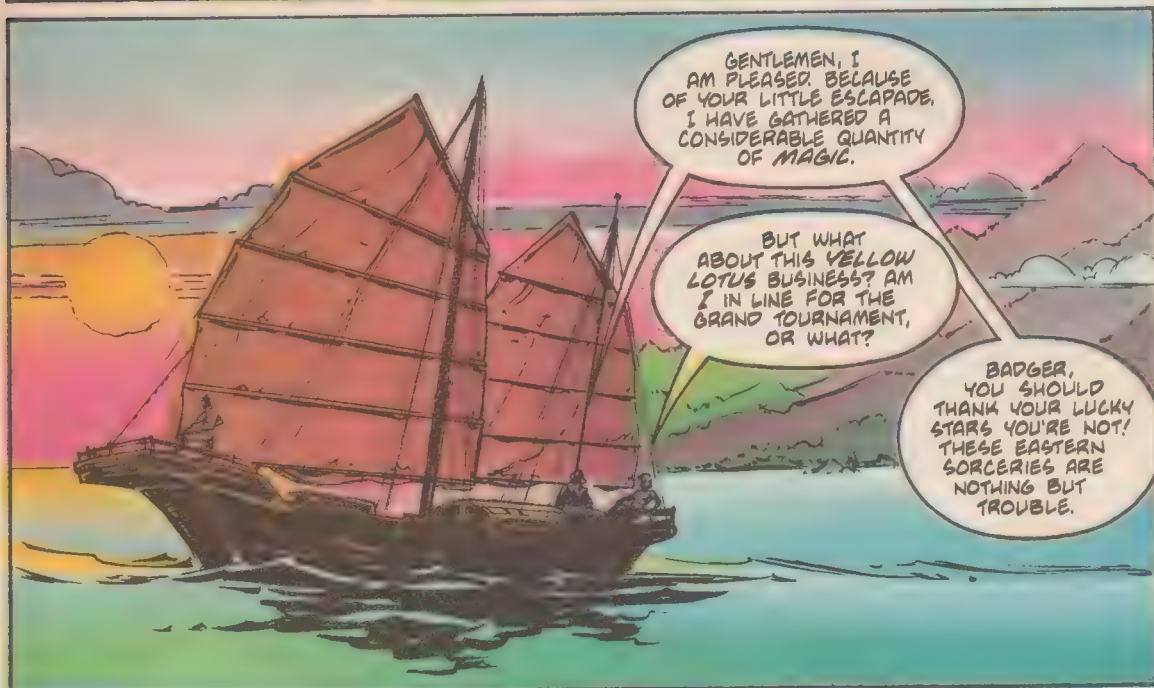
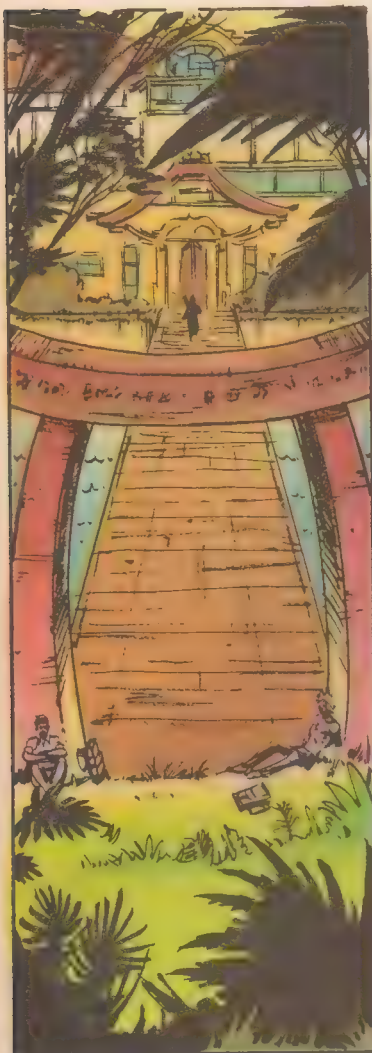


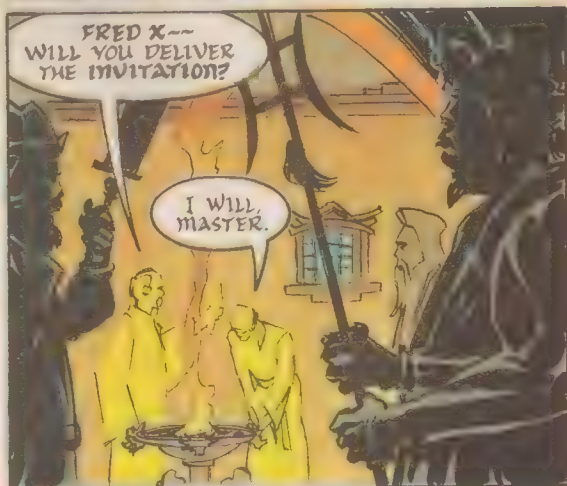
COMING IN NOVEMBER FROM FIRST. COUNT ON US.

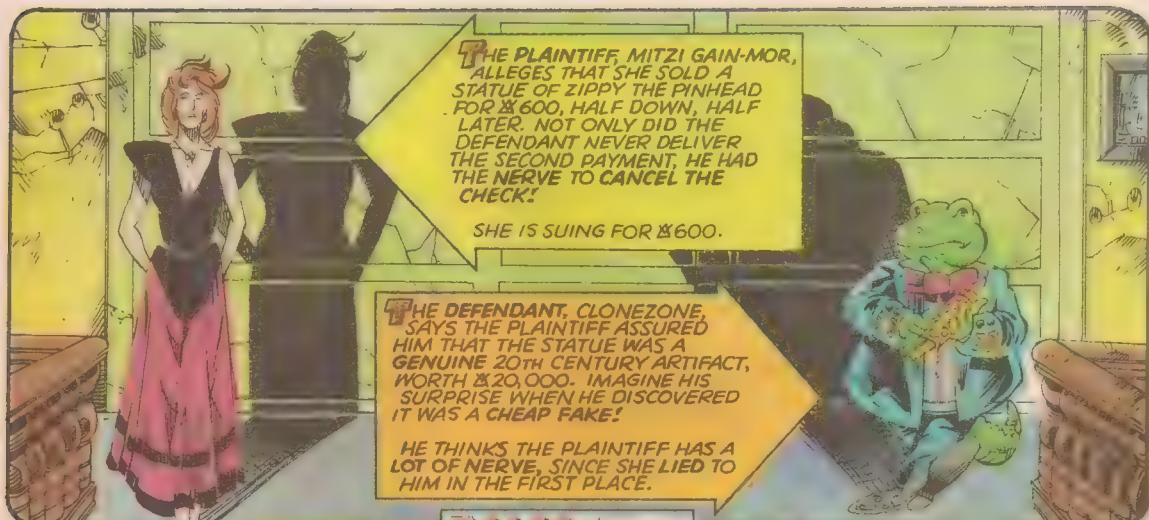
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THE PLAINTIFF, MITZI GAIN-MOR, ALLEGES THAT SHE SOLD A STATUE OF ZIPPY THE PINHEAD FOR £600, HALF DOWN, HALF LATER. NOT ONLY DID THE DEFENDANT NEVER DELIVER THE SECOND PAYMENT, HE HAD THE NERVE TO CANCEL THE CHECK!

SHE IS SUING FOR £600.

THE DEFENDANT, CLONEZONE, SAYS THE PLAINTIFF ASSURED HIM THAT THE STATUE WAS A GENUINE 20TH CENTURY ARTIFACT, WORTH £20,000. IMAGINE HIS SURPRISE WHEN HE DISCOVERED IT WAS A CHEAP FAKE!

HE THINKS THE PLAINTIFF HAS A LOT OF NERVE, SINCE SHE LIED TO HIM IN THE FIRST PLACE.

HELLO, I'M JUDAH MACCABEE. WELCOME TO ANOTHER EDITION OF...

TALES from the CLONEZONE

THE CREATURE'S COURT

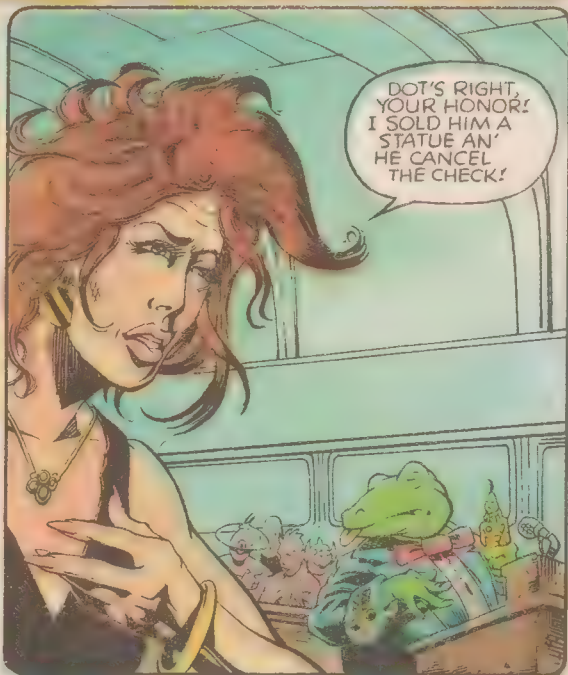
JUDGE: MIKE BARON
JURY: RICK OLIVER

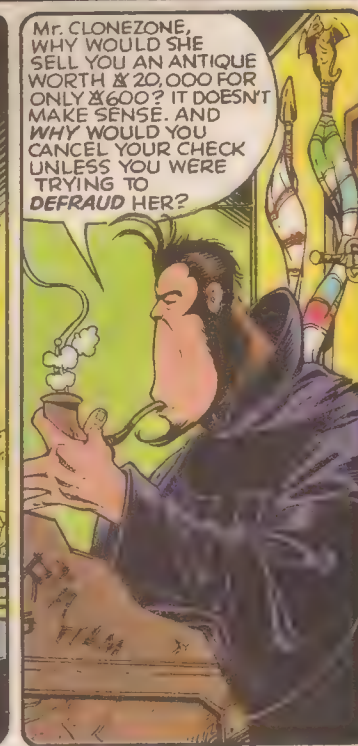
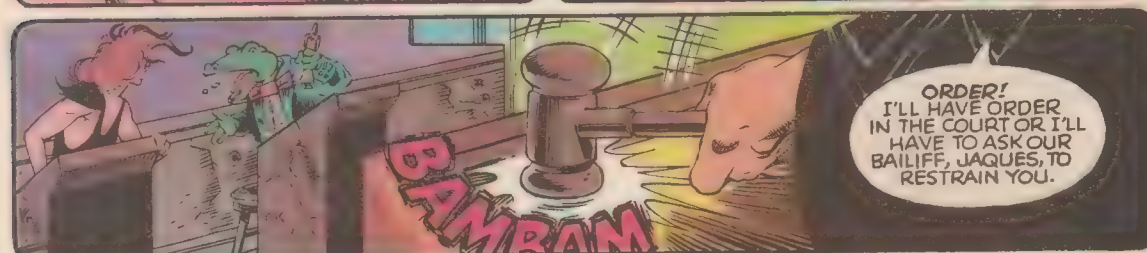
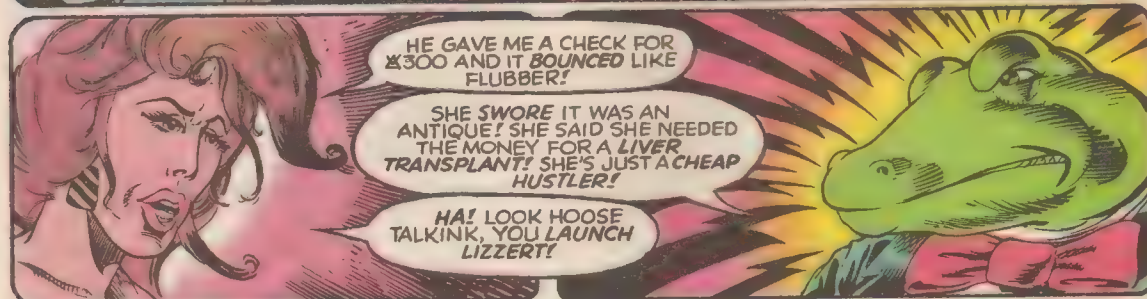
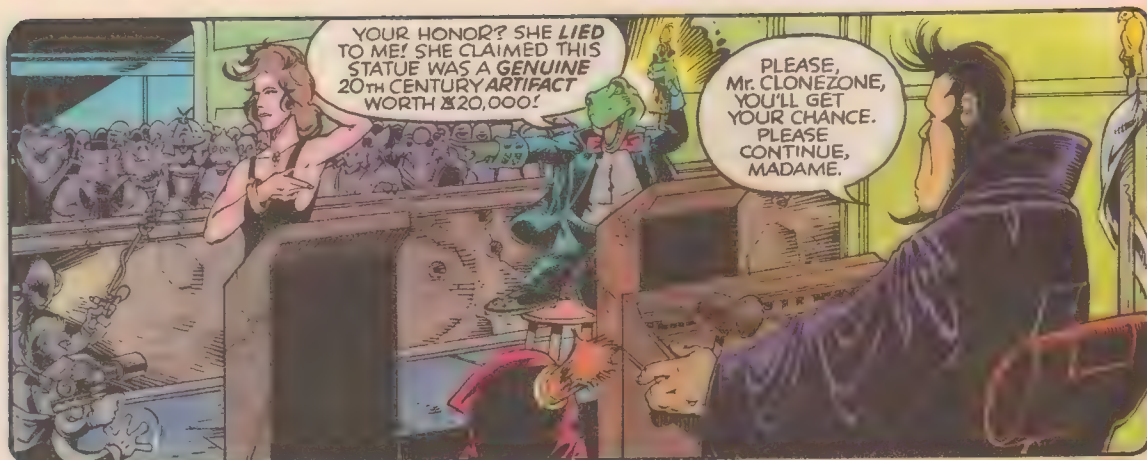
EXECUTIONER: MARK A. NELSON
COURT REPORTER: L. LOIS BUHALIS

COLOR COMMENTATOR: LINDA LESSMANN

PLEASE BE SEATED. I'VE READ YOUR STATEMENT, MADAME. YOU CLAIM THE DEFENDANT CANCELLED A CHECK?

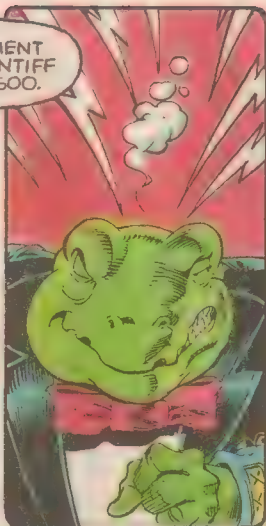
DOT'S RIGHT, YOUR HONOR! I SOLD HIM A STATUE AN' HE CANCELLED THE CHECK!



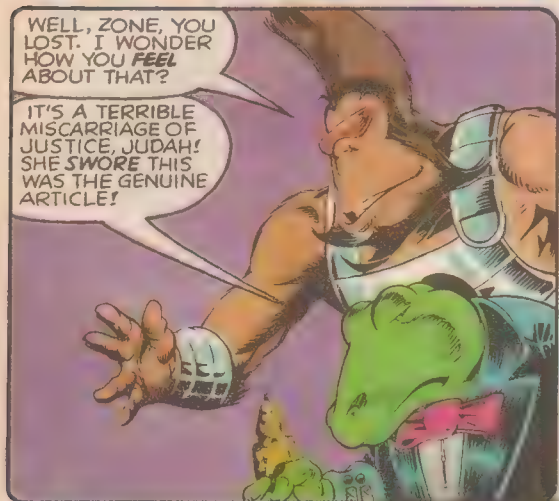




JUDGMENT
FOR PLAINTIFF
FOR \$600.

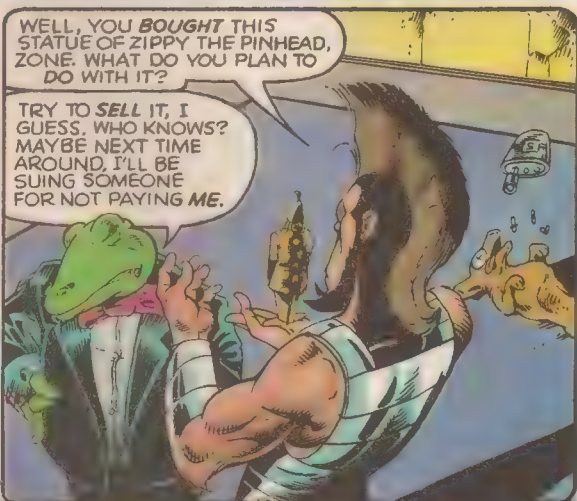


WELL, THE JUDGE
FINDS FOR THE
PLAINTIFF. HERE
COME THE LITIGANTS.
LET'S GET THEIR
REACTION TO
JUDGE DAVE'S
DECISION...



WELL, ZONE, YOU
LOST. I WONDER
HOW YOU *FEEL*
ABOUT THAT?

IT'S A TERRIBLE
MISCARRIAGE OF
JUSTICE, JUDAH!
SHE *SWORE* THIS
WAS THE GENUINE
ARTICLE!



WELL, YOU *BOUGHT* THIS
STATUE OF ZIPPY
THE PINHEAD,
ZONE. WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO
DO WITH IT?

TRY TO *SELL* IT, I
GUESS. WHO KNOWS?
MAYBE NEXT TIME
AROUND, I'LL BE
SUING SOMEONE
FOR NOT PAYING *ME*.



AND THERE YOU
HAVE IT. WE'LL MEET
OUR NEXT LITIGANTS
RIGHT AFTER THIS
IMPORTANT
MESSAGE.



**GIMME
A LIGHT!**



HE MEANT A LOX™ LIGHT.

OUR LITIGANTS ARE NOW ENTERING THE COURTROOM.

THE PLAINTIFF, CLONEZONE, ALLEGES THAT HE SOLD A STATUE OF ZIPPY THE PINHEAD TO THE DEFENDANT FOR \$1000, HALF NOW, HALF LATER. THEN THE DEFENDANT HAD THE NERVE TO CANCEL THE CHECK!



THE DEFENDANT, NEWTON DUPUIS, SAYS CLONEZONE SWORE THE STATUE WAS A GENUINE 20TH CENTURY ARTIFACT, WORTH \$50,000! IMAGINE HIS SURPRISE WHEN IT WAS APPRAISED BY EXPERTS AS A FAKE! BOTTOM LINE: THE DEFENDANT DOESN'T FEEL THE PLAINTIFF IS ENTITLED TO A NICKEL!



LET'S LISTEN AS JUDGE DAVE HEARS THE LITIGANTS...



MR. CLONEZONE, YOU CLAIM THE DEFENDANT BOUNCED A CHECK?

THAT'S RIGHT, YOUR HONOR! HE WAS GOING TO PAY A TOTAL OF £1000! HIS CHECK FOR £500 BOUNCED FOR INSUFFICIENT FUNDS! I'M SUING FOR **TRIPLE DAMAGES!**

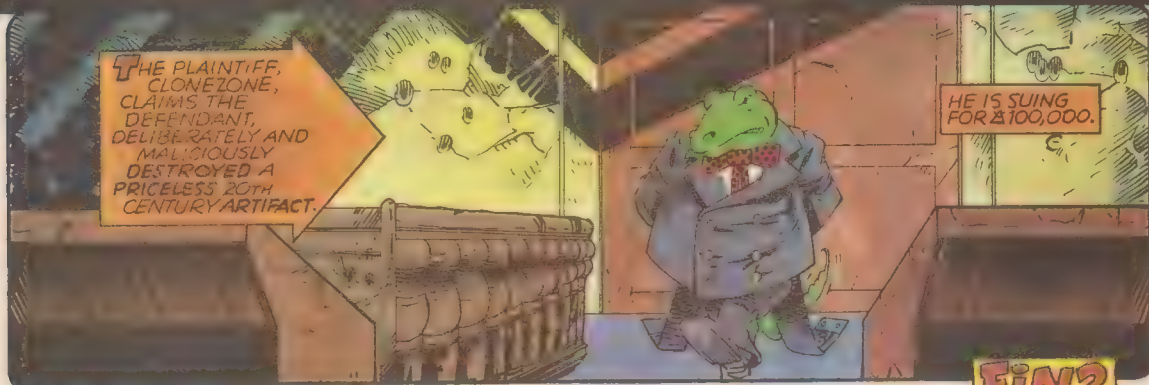
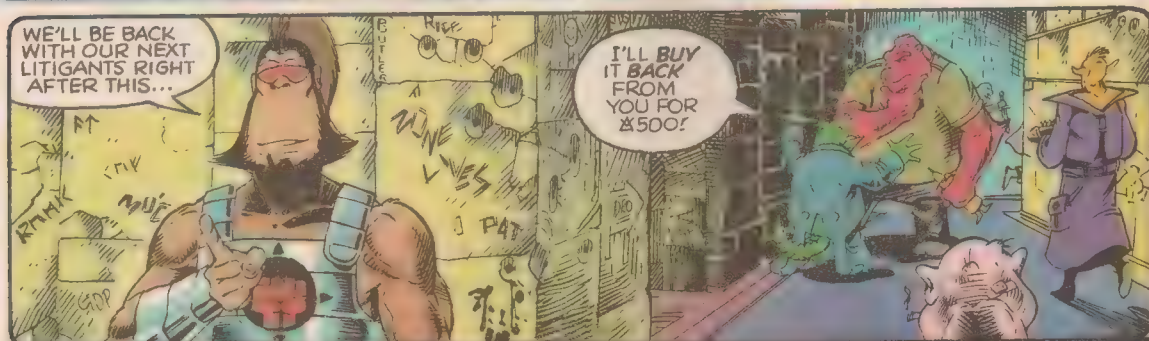
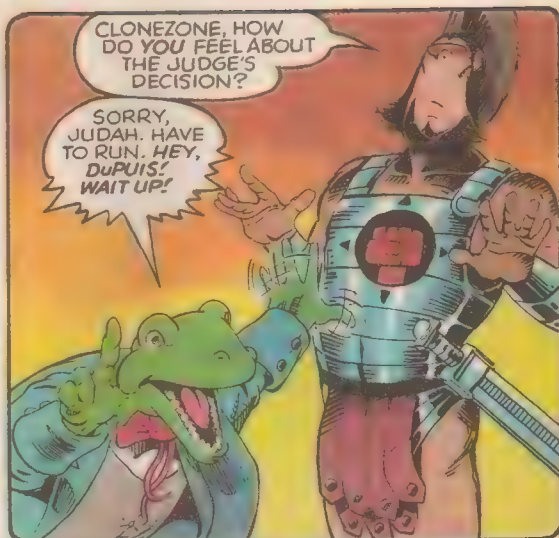
YOUR HONOR, THIS REPTILE **SWORE ON ALVIN** THAT THIS STATUE WAS A **GENUINE** ANTIQUE WORTH £50,000! IT'S JUST A **CHEAP FAKE!** NOT WORTH A **PLUGGED NICKEL!**

Mr. CLONEZONE, YOU WERE JUST IN HERE. YOU KNOW THE STATUE IS A CHEAP FAKE! HOW CAN YOU TURN AROUND AND SELL IT AS GENUINE?

YOUR HONOR, I'M **SPEECHLESS!** I HAD TO PAY THE PREVIOUS PLAINTIFF! WHY SHOULDN'T DUPLIS HAVE TO PAY ME?

Mr. CLONEZONE, WE NEVER ESTABLISHED THAT THE PREVIOUS PLAINTIFF **KNOWINGLY** SOLD YOU FALSE GOODS. BUT YOU OBVIOUSLY **KNEW** THE STATUE WAS FALSE.

Mr. CLONEZONE, I'M GOING TO SEND A MESSAGE TO CHARLATANS AND RIP-OFF ARTISTS EVERYWHERE. **JUDGMENT FOR THE DEFENDANT.**



FIN?

Dear LARRY,:

C/O FIRST COMICS
435 N. LASALLE
CHICAGO IL
60610

Dear Mike & Co.,

Badger is a really amazing comic. I thought so when it first hit the stands and I think so now. I've enjoyed every issue. In fact, I am hard pressed to think of a bad issue of the book. That is, up until #29.

Issue 29 was truly wretched. I mean, it was just stupid. I agonized over how this could be. Then it hit me. That disgusting, unfunny, idiotic lizagator had invaded the main story. It is bad enough that he occupies the rear end (how appropriate) of this book, must he soil the rest with his presence?

Mike, you are one of my favorite writers, but when is it going to end? Clonezone might just be the most unpopular character ever. He failed miserably in Nexus, why should you think he'd be any funnier here? I've smiled twice in the entire run of Clonezone.

You state that Clonezone fans have better things to do than write letters. I'm sure the three of them are indeed very busy doing things like buying stupid black and white rip-off animal comics and giving themselves shock therapy.

Get rid of him. Everyone hates him. Stop the madness.

And if you're looking for a back up, how about something a bit more serious, to offset the happy-go-lucky style of the main feature. Maybe something starring a one-eyed time displaced Celtic barbarian and his crew of pirates? Please?

M.G. Gliedman
1647 Glenwood Road
Brooklyn, NY 11230

You're entitled to your opinion, M.G., however wrong it may be. An informal poll at this year's

Chicago and San Diego Comicons revealed that Clonezone fans outnumber his detractors by more than 2 to 1! And in keeping with the fairness doctrine, we will now run more than two letters of praise for issue #29...

Dear Larry,

Re: #29. THE ABSOLUTE BEST ISSUE EVER!! Better than slugging it out with "Bob." Better even than beating up Cobra Crisp in #9. Hell, EVEN THE CLONEZONE BACK-UP WAS FUNNY! I cannot believe it.

Shawn Metcalf
351 Willow Wood
Palatine, IL 60067

Dear Larry,

Bravo! My compliments on the single finest issue of Badger produced since the inception of the title. Finally, the latent promise of Badger is realized in issue 29. Mike Baron's scripting has never been better; crisp, lively, economical, and (surprise!) genuinely funny (irreverent and iconoclastic humor, Badger's hallmark and what initially attracted me to the series, had been sadly misplaced since issue 23; recent issues being astoundingly humorless). In "The Magic Word," Baron takes full advantage of Badger's free-wheeling style to maximize tremendous story potential inherent in the non-genre structure of the series (heretofore only brushed upon in Badger's appearances in Nexus). Nicely done, Mike.

Eric Shanower's artwork is undeniably the best this title has yet been blessed with. He executes the cleanest pencilling and inking of any of his peers, and I would stack his work on issue 29 against the artwork of

any current title. Butler's style, although somewhat stilted, had been my preference, and Reinhold can be adequate provided he's backed by a good inker, like Dee. However, the last few issues in which Reinhold has performed double-duty have been quite painful, the artwork bordering on caricature. Concerning Beckum, the less said, the better.

This may be circular reasoning, but it appears as though Baron, and therefore Badger, were revitalized by Shanower's presence. The energy and excitement in issue 29 is palpable. I am frankly disappointed to see Shanower only as a single-shot guest artist, but perhaps Badger can holdover and maintain the sheer restless kineticism that made "The Magic Word" such a joy to read. Thanks.

Brian D. Boyle
P.O. Box 661602
Sacramento, CA 95866

You're welcome, Brian. I, too, am a card-carrying member of the Eric Shanower fan club. And for the three people who don't already know, Eric's third all-new Oz graphic novel will be coming out in November.

But in defense of Bill Reinhold, I have to say that his enormous contribution over the past 28 issues has helped shape Badger as we all know and love him. That's why we have entrusted Bill with the task of rendering the forthcoming 64-page Badger graphic novel. So who will be drawing Badger while Bill does the graphic novel? Stay tuned for an important announcement at the end of this lettercol.

Dear Larry,

"It's always a pleasure to have a visit from the ghost of Warren Oates. Personally, I think you should make Warren Oates the new back-up and give Clonezone his own book."

Zounds! Double zounds! And yet again, zounds! Well, I sure did enjoy Mr. Baron's writing in his short time with us, but now he's not going to be around much longer. And you know why, of course, don't you? Well, I'm sure you will once all the Clonezone haters (I am not one, by the way) come to maim you all down in your offices in Chicago. I am quite sure they were not at all pleased to see the lizigator show up in the main Badger story as well as in the back-up. Better watch out for letter bombs, guys!

On a brighter note, those of us with good taste enjoyed both "The Magic Word" and "Masterpiece Show." I particularly enjoyed the guest appearances by Clonezone, Grimjack, and W.C. Fields. And, of course, it's always a pleasure to have a visit from the ghost of Warren Oates. Personally, I think you should make Warren Oates the new back-up and give Clonezone his own book.

By the way, please inform Mike that it's time Badger got back to taking care of all the crooks and loons back here in Madison. I mean, come on! Where was Badger when the Extraterrestrial Walk-ins came to town? He could have had *loads* of fun with them. And where was he when the lady at the bicycle store was being rude to me? Huh? What are us little people here in Madison supposed to do while Badger's off drinkin' beer and being Clonezone's lawyer?

Mel Gibson as the Badger? Uhk! No way, Larry! It's Dwight Schultz or nobody!

T.J. Campbell
1225 Bay Ridge Road
Madison, WI 53716

At this point, Clonezone ran

out of money to pay off his literate "fans," and we were forced to switch to a more serious letter...

Dear Sirs,

Let me first say that I enjoy your comic the Badger very much. After frequenting the local comics book store I have come to realize that you reach a broad range of people and that is why I am writing this letter.

I have enclosed the newsletter, "Humane News" in which appears an article, (p.17) about a proposed government unit called "The Animal Damage Control Unit," whose sole purpose is to destroy eagles, hawks, badgers, etc., all for the benefit of our "poor" cattle ranchers who wish to place profit above life and our country's natural heritage. The inclusion of badgers on this list made me feel that this book is an ideal forum to reach a lot of people who might otherwise never hear of this proposed bill.

Please readers, if you enjoy this comic then you must hold some of the convictions of its main character. Those of you that cheer on the Badger, who wish he were real, won't YOU do something in that same spirit that will help for REAL these threatened animals? No wizard will zap you out west to beat up cattle ranchers; you can't Kung-Fu upside the head the legislators who proposed this outrage; you can do something even *better*. You can stop it all together. You, all of us, have this power. All you have to do is WRITE! Write to this address:

The Senate Subcommittee on Agriculture, SD140, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510; or House Subcommittee on Agriculture, 2362 Rayburn House Office,

Washington, CD 20515.

Write and tell them NO, you do not want your tax dollars spent to kill wildlife. Tell them that you are ANGRY that they could even think of proposing such legislation. Tell 'em NO WAY LARRY!

Elizabeth Dellapenta
586 Hanover Street
Manchester, NH 03104

Thanks for the tip, Elizabeth. Now all of you Badger fans can prove that the pen is mightier than the costumed superhero.



NEXT MONTH: Ex Ex-Mutants artist Ron Lim joins creator/writer Mike Baron for at least four issues of Badger, and maybe more! Mike Zeck takes over the cover, and Bill Reinhold keeps working on the forthcoming Badger graphic novel!

— Rick Oliver

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